



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE
COUNTY OF LEE, STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

JANUARY 3, 2006

A special meeting of the Board of Commissioners for the County of Lee, State of North Carolina, conveyed at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room, Lee County Government Center, 106 Hillcrest Drive, Sanford, North Carolina, on said date. Commissioners present were W. Chad Adams, Robert H. Brown, Herbert A. Hincks, Jerry M. Lemmond, Nathan E. Paschal, Robert T. Reives, and Amy L. Stevens.

Chairman Hincks called the meeting to order and the following business was transacted:

County Attorney K. R. Hoyle delivered the invocation.

Chairman Hincks led the pledge of allegiance.

The Board considered additional agenda items. Commissioner Brown asked that Item C under New Business (staffing request from the Tax Office) be pulled until a report is submitted at the January 23, 2006 meeting concerning status of the recent audit review and recommendations for improvements. After some discussion, Commissioner Brown withdrew his request.

Mr. James Pitts of 610 Pecan Lane, Sanford, signed up to speak during the Public Comments section of the meeting. Mr. Pitts expressed concerns he has with the county paying incentives with county tax dollars.

The Board considered Senate Bill 223 (voting machine) compliant options. County Manager David Smitherman told the Board that he and the County Attorney had participated in statewide conference calls over the past several days concerning the January 20, 2006 deadline for counties to enter into contract for purchase of S223 compliant voting machines. Lee County currently uses MicroVote machines that are compliant with all aspects of federal law, but do not comply with S223's paper receipt requirement. Mr. Smitherman told the Board that MicroVote has submitted a second request to the State Board of Elections to recertify their machines by January 19, 2006. Therefore, if approved by the State Board of Elections for paper receipt retrofit, Lee County's machines may be available for use in the May primary. Currently there is only one company certified in North Carolina to purchase machines from at this time. After much discussion, Chairman Hincks moved to approve a resolution and letter to Governor Easley asking him to call a special session of the North Carolina General Assembly to delay implementation of Senate Bill 223, copies of which are attached to these minutes and by this reference made a part hereof. Upon a vote, the results were as follows:

Aye: Adams, Brown, Hincks, Lemmond, Paschal, Reives, and Stevens
Nay: None

The Chairman ruled the motion had been adopted unanimously.

The Board considered economic development incentives for Challenge Printing Company in the amount of \$84,273.00; System Plast USA in the amount of \$59,740.00; and Pentair Water, Pool & Spa in the amount of \$40,527.00. After some discussion, Commissioner Reives moved to approve the above economic development incentives as outlined by Economic Development Director Bob Heuts, copies of which are attached to these minutes and by this reference made a part hereof. Upon a vote, the results were as follows:

Aye: Brown, Hincks, Lemmond, Paschal, Reives, and Stevens
Nay: Adams

The Chairman ruled the motion had been adopted by a six to one vote.

Commissioner Adams read the following statement and asked that it be made a part of the record:

“Since 1998 I have been generally supportive of “incentives” because I actually believed in them. I, like many others, believed they helped to create an easier environment for companies to come to and grow in Lee County. Over time, however, I’ve studied and read and sought to better understand the realities of these economic policies and I can no longer ethically support them. Citizens and businesses pay their taxes, it’s how local government provides services. If they don’t, local Government will take away their property. Incentives lead us to believe that folks are paying their taxes, but in truth, they get back 50% of what they pay. No other companies get such a benefit. Does that mean that the county will only provide 50% of the services? No, it means that those who pay 100% of their taxes are subsidizing those who pay 50%. And it’s not about jobs as our EDC and county have never monitored job creation for companies receiving incentives. We do this because we think businesses won’t stay here or come here without them. But businesses make decisions for business reasons. And if the reason they come here is because of a 50% lower tax rate, then maybe we should examine why our taxes are too high for business. I cannot stand idly by any longer, these are bad for Lee County, and I believe there should be at least one official who wants local government to treat all businesses equally. As long as one supports incentives, they are not treating businesses as equals.”

The Board considered a staffing request from the Tax Office. Tax Administrator Kep Kepley asked the Board to approve the hiring of an additional four (4) to six (6) Data Collectors to assist with the 2007 Revaluation Project. Mr. Kepley stated that there are currently ten (10) Data Collectors of which three (3) may be leaving shortly. Since it takes approximately one month to train a Data Collector, Mr. Kepley would like to have additional employees to make sure the ten (10) slots are filled at all times. After much discussion, Commissioner Reives moved to approve Mr. Kepley’s request to hire an additional four (4) Data Collectors for the 2007 Revaluation Project. Upon a vote, the results were as follows:

Aye: Adams, Brown, Hincks, Lemmond, Paschal, Reives, and Stevens
Nay: None

The Chairman ruled the motion had been adopted unanimously.

Chairman Hincks moved to go into closed session to discuss matters relating to the location of a business per NC General Statute 143-318.11(a) (4), and a personnel matter per NC General Statute 143-318.11(a) (6). Upon a vote, the results were as follows:

Aye: Adams, Brown, Hincks, Lemmond, Paschal, Reives, and Stevens
Nay: None

The Chairman ruled the motion had been adopted unanimously and the Board was in closed session. After completing business in closed session, Commissioner Brown moved to go out of closed session. Upon a vote, the results were as follows:

Aye: Adams, Brown, Hincks, Lemmond, Paschal, Reives, and Stevens
Nay: None

The Chairman ruled the motion had been adopted unanimously.

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Hincks moved to adjourn the meeting. Upon a vote, the results were as follows:

Aye: Adams, Brown, Hincks, Lemmond, Paschal, Reives, and Stevens
Nay: None

The Chairman ruled the motion had been adopted unanimously and the meeting adjourned in keeping with the motion.

Herbert A. Hincks, Chairman

ATTEST:

Gaynell M. Lee, Clerk